



Men's Golf Fellowship

Speaker Discussion Questions

Dave Wannstedt

LEADER'S GUIDE

Spiritual Topics: Life's Foundations, Life's Purpose, and Personal Change

About the Talk

Dave had it all. A successful college coaching career, a good marriage, a happy family life and yet, as he tells it, there was still something missing. It wasn't until he was challenged by the Miami University football chaplain to jump in with both feet with God that something clicked. Dave shared very humbly how he began to change as a result of a "trial and error" experiment with God. Let's spend some time discussing Dave's faith experiment and the changes that occurred in his life and see what we can learn from him.

Discussion Questions

- Toward the end of his talk, Dave told the story of a crack that formed on an interior wall of a house. The owner patched it several times and each time it returned even bigger. He finally called an expert who discovered that the wall in the house wasn't the problem; it was the foundation that was cracked. Pause for a moment and consider what foundational beliefs your life is built upon (i.e. financial security will bring happiness, having the "right" friends, being in the perfect marital relationship, being considered the smartest person in the room, being the most successful, having the lowest handicap, etc.). How has that brought you happiness? Have you ever wondered if there was something more substantial to build your life around? **Related Scripture: Matthew 7:24-27**
 - *Where we're going: God (Jesus) as the firm foundation.* In this section, we want to challenge the men to think more deeply about what they have built their life upon and have them consider God as their foundation.
 - *Going Deeper:* Tim Keller in his book, *Counterfeit Gods*, wrote: *If you get married as Jacob did (Genesis 29), putting the weight of all your deepest hopes and longings on the person you are marrying, you are going to crush him or her with your expectations...No person, not even the best one, can give your soul all it needs...If we look to some created thing to give us the meaning, hope, and happiness that only God himself can give, it will eventually fail to deliver and break our hearts.* Now ask: What have you put the weight of all your deepest hopes and longings on? Has it ever

broken your heart? Have your foundational beliefs ever let you down, or failed to deliver what you expected? Here you want to press in on what they have built their life upon and how, if it isn't God, it will always let them down. One way to identify their foundational beliefs is to ask: "what is it that, when you do not get it, makes you angry?". Anger is a good way to reveal what people's foundational beliefs are.

- *Deeper Yet:* Read Acts 4:11-12. What were the disciples saying about Jesus? How could Jesus be a solid foundation for a life? (Jesus' promises of forgiveness of sin, peace with God and a hope of life beyond this one are guaranteed. He is the only person who has ever made promises that will never let you down.)
- Dave spoke of having it all at the University of Miami after they won the National Championship. He explained that after winning the National Championship he sat on the beach and reflected on his life. He had success in his career, his family and marriage were doing fine, job offers were coming in, yet he described a feeling of emptiness that day. Can you relate to that at all? Have you ever had times in your life when you felt like you had it all, that everything seemed to be clicking, that you had life by the tail? Have you ever felt at times that something was missing, or have emptiness like Dave did? What did you do, if anything, to fill that void in your life?

Related Scripture: Ecclesiastes 5:10

- *Where we're going: Meaning in life.* The purpose of this discussion is to get men thinking about and discussing the thought that meaning, purpose and value is ultimately found in God and not in anything else.
- *Going Deeper:* Dave went to the team Chaplain and explained his emptiness and thought that what was missing had something to do with God. The Chaplain agreed and told Dave that he was metaphorically "walking around the swimming pool but was afraid to jump in with two feet" with God. What do you think the chaplain meant by that? (This question could go in several directions, such as commitment to church, tithing, church attendance, volunteering, etc. As a leader you want to bend the conversation back to a personal commitment to God.) Discuss what being committed to God looks like. Do you consider yourself committed to God? If so, how? How could you commit to God in a deeper way, i.e. jump in with two feet?
- *Deeper Yet:* Dave made a decision that he would commit to living his life the way the bible describes it, on what he called a "trial and error" basis, in order to see if God was really there. As a group, build a list of some of the ways the bible directs you to live your life. (You may want to come with a fairly robust list yourself in order to help the men along.) Why do you think that the bible gives these guidelines in life? (Although answers will vary, what we are getting at is that God knows what is harmful to you and what is good for you. He cares about you and wants you to flourish.)

- Dave was humbly honest and specific when describing how his “trial and error” experiment began to change him. Change can be good, but also hard. Take a few moments to consider how you have changed throughout your lifetime. What is one way in which you have changed? What was it that sparked those changes? Were the changes intentional or forced by circumstances? If there was one area in your life in which you would like to still see change, what would it be? **Related Scripture: Romans 12:2**

- *Where we’re going: Transformation.* The purpose of this discussion is get men thinking about change (i.e. transformation) in their lives in order to have a discussion about how God changes people when they have a relationship with Him.
- *Going Deeper:* Dave described several areas of his life that began to change as a result of his “trial and error” commitment experiment with God. Let’s explore each one:

- 1) Locker room talk. Dave spoke of how his desire to participate in what he called “locker room talk” slowly went away as he committed himself to God. What does “locker room talk” look like? (Things like talking about women in a dishonoring fashion, telling and laughing at crude/rude jokes on the golf course, using crude or foul language, boasting about accomplishments, etc.)
- 2) Relationship with wife. His relationship with his wife, which was not bad, got even better. His wife told him he was getting “nicer.” How would you like your relationship with your wife to change? Now go around the group and ask each man to share one way they could change in order to make that a reality? (Make sure that the discussion does not wander into how the men want their wives to change, keep it focused on them.)
- 3) His working relationships changed. Dave explained that he became a much more humble and collaborative leader and less type “A.” Go around the group and ask each man to share their leadership style. Then ask if there was one change they could make in their leadership style, what would it be?
- 4) The bible. If your group is able to go deeper, there was one more change that Dave spoke of, his desire to read his bible grew daily. He described how it seemed as if everything he read in the bible suddenly related to his job and life. Is that something that anyone in the group could relate to? Ask the men if they read their Bible on a daily, weekly or monthly basis?
 - *Even Deeper:* Read Psalm 139:23-24 aloud. These verses are an invitation for God to reveal the ways in which we should change.

Closing Prayer

Lord, please help me to search out the areas in my life that need to change. I am sometimes too blind to my own needs to even be able to locate them. Even though change is difficult, help me to understand that if it will please you, it is good. Amen. (Based on Psalm 139:23-24)